

Inheritance Incorruptible

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Preacher: Rev Andrew Coghill

[0 : 00] We read these verses 4 and 5 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Now of course we looked this morning at the valley of decision, multitudes, multitudes we said in the prophecy of Joel in the valley of decision and that we said was the time of God's giving judgment ultimately in all the world and discerning between that which was his and that which was not and that which would be blessed and received of him and that which would simply be under judgment.

But we said also how though the lion roared from Zion, if one is behind the lion as opposed to in front of it, if the lion is on your side then you have nothing to fear because it roars for you and he roars in protection of you and the prey which is under his claws is not you but that which would attack you, that which would destroy you.

The Lord seeks the protection and vindication of his people and now Peter tells us and speaks to us this evening of that which is laid up for those who love the Lord.

Blessed be the Lord.

[1 : 52] John is the apostle of love.

Christ's death of course Peter was in a state of devastation. He could not even bring himself as far as we know to be physically present at the cross. Having denied the Lord, having denied the Lord those three times as Jesus had predicted, having gone out and wept bitterly when he was found out as it were and it was said in previous weeks that a word that we have translated for Jesus or for Peter's weeping is different from that used to describe the weeping of Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus which is a sort of gentle overflowing of the emotion, the sorrow of loss, the sharing of the pain of bereavement with the likes of Mary and Martha and others.

As the tears sort of tears sort of tears.

His beloved disciple sought him out from the other disciples. Yet we also have reason to believe Peter was apart from the other disciples when Jesus rose from the dead.

Could not bring himself to associate with the others because of his shame. And that is no doubt one reason why in Mark's account of the gospel our Lord specifically says go and tell my disciples and Peter about this resurrection.

[3 : 57] And of course the Lord appeared to Peter that first day. That's what Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 15. He appeared first to Seppus and then to the eleven and then to others and so on. But he made this appearance in Peter.

The resurrection then is central. It is integral to Peter's restoration with Jesus. Without resurrection there is no hope for Peter. And because Christ is risen again from the dead so the Lord's people likewise will rise from the dead.

As surely as one part of the body follows the other. And we've used the imagery in the past that somebody may be sort of pulling themselves through a hedge or something. As the head sticks out and the rest of them follow.

You know that the torso and the centre of the body and the legs and the feet are going to follow. Because the head and the shoulders are coming out. You can't bring out part and not the rest. And as surely as the head comes out the rest will come out too.

So likewise as the head and king of the church has been raised to life. So likewise the rest of his body the church will infallibly follow.

[5 : 00] And this is central to Peter's whole philosophy and theology. That the resurrection is his great hope. He is the apostle of hope. And this is what we read of.

His desire, his knowledge that the Lord has risen. But also the reason, one reason he focuses upon this future hope and glory is. You know as Jesus says in John 21 when he makes this pronouncement of restoration.

I feed my lambs and feed my sheep. He says, Verily, verily I say unto thee. When thou wast young thou girded thyself and walkest whither thou wouldst. But when thou shalt be old thou shalt stretch forth thy hands.

And another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. This spake ye signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this he said unto him, Follow me. Now of course we don't know how long Peter was able to go on being a witness and an apostle for the Lord before his eventual martyrdom. But we do know because Christ has predicted it.

[6 : 03] That eventually he would be confined. He would be bound. He would be executed. He would be martyred for the Lord. But how many years was he able to give to the Lord?

What age was he when the Lord first called him by the shores of Galilee? We don't know. But what we do know is that just as with all who finally come to Christ and who are converted and born again. There is always a part of them. However young they may have been when they come to know the Lord. There is always a part of them that laments what seems to be the wasted years.

That laments the years beforehand when they didn't know Christ as their personal saviour. That wishes they could gather those up too and give them to Christ. That laments all the years that have, all the water that's flowed under the bridge.

All the years that have sort of withered and wasted away. But in the very prophet we were looking at this morning, remember the prophet Joel the Lord says that he is able to restore the years that the locusts have eaten.

[7 : 06] All the times of sorrow. All the times of judgment. All that seems to have been wasted and lost. The Lord can make good and make good in abundance. And this is partly, I would suggest to you, one reason why Peter is so focused upon the resurrection.

Because the resurrection is to life not only in all its fullness but to life in all its eternity. Whereas this life is so, so brief.

And gone in the blink of an eye. And no matter how many years you're able to give to the Lord.

They are gone so swiftly. It's never enough. You know, the worldling thinks in terms of, oh well the best case scenario for me would be to live to a good old age.

And just live my life in the world and sin my little heart out. And then finally maybe a month or a week before my deathbed. Then turn to the Lord and be saved and be converted.

And then get eternity as well. Wouldn't that be brilliant? Get the best of this life and then the best of eternity. Except that if he was truly converted so late in life.

[8 : 12] And remember it's J.C. Ryle that warns us that a godly bishop of Liverpool from the 19th century says, Although he grants that late conversions may happen, although they may be real, yet they are very silver and they are very few.

And those which are deathbed conversions, although they do happen, yet you cannot trust in them or rely on them. Because they are so rare, because they are so few, and perhaps even when people may profess great things, if they think they're going to die, how do we even know for certain that that is genuine in the heart?

The Lord knows. But such a soul, if they were genuinely, truly converted on their deathbed, the agony of that coming to know the Lord would be, all the years that have been lost, all the years that have been wasted, all the years which if they are truly converted, they would wish they had laid upon the altar of God's service.

They would wish they had something to give back. They would wish that the tears and the brokenhearted times and all the sorrows and the difficulties could have been those which were incurred in the service of the Lord.

That the tears there would have been bottled and every sigh recorded, are they not, to my book? Whereas that which is for the world's in a sense simply done the drain.

[9 : 37] Although we know, of course, that the Lord doesn't waste anything that is ultimately given to them. He doesn't waste, for example, all the learning and all the abilities and all the characteristics which Paul had.

You know, all his learning of the Pharisee tradition and the law and the scriptures and so on, the Lord is able to take that and apply it to Paul in his new Christian state. Just as all new own

experience, the Lord is able to take and gather and use.

But years which have been just spent and frittered away without the Lord, that is what they are, frittered away. Because we have so few and they are gone so swiftly.

And Peter's desire, whatever age he may have been when he came to know the Lord, will have regarded those previous years as in a sense lost, in a sense wasted. But if what is before is an eternity of glory, of life in all its fullness, this is a great hope.

Resurrection is this great hope. The apostle of hope. Just as John is regarded, as we said, by some of the apostle of love and Paul, the apostle of faith.

[10:47] Peter, the apostle of hope, because the resurrection is so central to his own restoration with Christ and to his own hope hereafter.

All the years that the locusts have eaten, the Lord can make good, but only if we be in heaven. To an inheritance then, which is incorruptible.

It is incapable of decay. Because it is not of this world into which, of course, sin has entered in. And because sin has entered in, that sort of cancerous corruption is in there already.

Even in a life which may be outwardly pristine and even completely devoted to the Lord, there will be imperfection, there will be sin, there will be failure, and ultimately in this world there will be death. Unless the Lord comes back. So in this world we are corruptible. But that which is laid up in heaven for us is incorruptible. Because it is incapable of having any taint of death or sin or anything in it.

[11:53] Incorruptible and undefiled. Nothing has entered into the Lord's presence which will in any way besmirch it or darken it in any way.

He is of pure eyes than to behold iniquity. And if we seek to bring our favourite pet sins with us, or the desires or the things that we regard as maybe just as important as God, and bring them with us into glory, they simply won't enter.

And if we are determined to cling to them, then we simply won't enter. This is one wild palace, this throne room, into which we simply will not be admitted if we are going to bring any of the junk of this world with us.

Indeed, we won't even be admitted if we let go of it all. Except we have an entrance with someone who goes before us and admits us under their name and under cover of their righteousness, even Christ, of course, our Saviour and our intercessor.

So it is an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away. Even the best things of this world will ultimately, because of their decay, they will have a lifespan and they will fade.

[13:05] But that which is eternal will not fade away. And it is an inheritance because you do not earn it. You cannot work for it, you cannot labour, you cannot merit it in any way.

Although we labour for the Lord here, we are, as Jesus says, unprofitable servants. We have done but that which is our duty to do. It is an inheritance that is ours to claim to inherit primarily because of the death of the testator, his women, testament, he has left for us this inheritance, this glory because he has died, we inherit.

But in the normal way of things, and I say in the normal way of things because obviously if Christ comes back, then death doesn't happen to us. In that sense, we will change. We will not all sleep, but that happens, but we shall all be changed.

But in the normal way of things, if the coming of Christ is beyond the time when our natural span of years here would continue, then we would expect to die in the normal way of things.

And that being the case, it is only in passing from time into eternity that we will ultimately inherit that which is laid up, reserved in heaven for you.

[14:19] Now notice, of course, that one of the things of the authorised version is you can distinguish between that which is singular and that which is plural. Because the end of that was singular, you was plural. And the you was collective.

Peter is addressing the Lord's people. Ultimately, you could say he's addressing, in the original context, Jewish believers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and so on.

But he is addressing the church in every age, whether Jewish or Gentile. But it is reserved in heaven for you, collectively, the Lord's people. Jesus said, I go to prepare a place for you, collectively.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself. But where I am, there ye may be also. That, of course, is the ultimate glory of Emmanuel's land.

The land is all the glory of Emmanuel's land. It is reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation.

[15:17] So this inheritance that is there, in a sense, this is real life, in all its fullness, into which we hope to enter. This is one reason why, for Peter, this is such a big deal.

Because the years we have had, wherein people constrained us, and where we were bound, even if we're not going through what Peter went through, and others will need you, whether you would not want to go.

And he mentioned what kind of death, he would glorify God by. So even if we're not captives, even if we're not bound, even if we're not in chains, we are still constricted in this world.

You know, we do not many of the things in this life, most of the things in this life, if you think about it, we don't actually choose. We don't choose who our parents are going to be.

We don't choose when to be born. We don't choose where to be born. We don't choose, really, the houses that we live in, or the cars that we drive, or whatever. We have to go within what is within our budget.

[16:15] We have to go in where it is in relation to, say, our work. We have to pass our exams, or whatever, in relation to the abilities, or gifts the Lord has given us, particular aptitudes, in one particular set of disciplines, but not in another.

So many things in our lives. We don't actually have complete choice over. We are constricted to an extent, but within the constrictions of this life, we are designed, and we are to glorify the Lord.

We are called to follow Him, and give ourselves completely to Him, in the brief span of years He has given us. You see, Peter, as much as anyone would be conscious, of the constraints, the restrictions of this life, that there isn't enough time, to tell everybody you would want to tell.

There isn't enough physical strength, to undertake all the journeys, and the arduous service, that he would want to do for the Lord. He would want to give himself, on a hundred lifetimes to the Lord, but you've only got one.

And by the time you come to the Lord, so many years have already passed away. And by the time, maybe, the Lord is able to use your gifts, or abilities, so many things have already happened, that have you in, so many different ways.

[17:28] Geographically, or terms of physically, or whatever strength he would have left, or years that are left to you. And Peter knows this. And this is partly what Jesus spoke of. When you were young, you thought you could do what you liked.

Of course, you were quite constricted then, regardless, but you thought you could do what you liked. But when you're old, you'll be more and more and more hemmed in. And that is the case, friends, whether or not we are in Christ, if you think about it.

Because even if we're not in Christ, and we think, oh, if I'm not in Christ, I can do what I like. I can go what I want. I can do what I want. Well, up to a point you can, but you're still confined by financial constraints.

You're still confined to an extent by geography, or by ties of blood, or by property, or whatever it might be. You're far more constricted than you think. And as you get older, of course, and as your strength decays, and you no longer have the ability, and the physical strength that you once did, well, other people have to look after you.

Other people have to do things for you, which maybe once you would have done with yourself. And you wouldn't dream of anybody doing these things, whether feeding you, or dressing you, or looking after you, or whatever the case may be.

[18:34] And more and more, the longer we live, and the weaker we get, as we decay and corrupt in this veil of time, and soon, we become less and less independent.

And that is even without the Lord. But with the Lord, even that decay, even that confinement, still affords us opportunity to live for Him, to witness for Him, to shine for Him, and with the prospect of eternity, and glory up ahead of us.

A bishop in the 17th century, called Pearson, has said this. He said, the resurrection of our bodies is a kind of coming out of the womb of the earth, and entering upon immortality, and nativity into another life.

I'll say that again. The resurrection of our bodies is a kind of coming out of the womb of the earth, and entering upon immortality, and nativity into another life.

Now, it's a very good illustration, because if you think about it, you know, when we are in the womb of our mothers, we are not in non-existence, we are alive. There is a living soul within the womb of the mother carrying the child.

[19 : 48] And it is a living soul that is there as the child grows, and as it develops within the womb, it is alive. And of course, some children, of course, die naturally from the womb, and they never see the light of day.

They are alive for as many months in there as they are inside, their mother being carried there, and nurtured, and nourished by all that the Lord has designed, that her body should feed and nourish it with.

They are alive. It is an immortal soul there within the mother that is being carried. Whether or not it ever sees the light of day, and whether it dies from the womb naturally, or whether, tragically, the industrial scale slaughter of the unborn, that was an affliction, and a blight upon our nation just now, should be the reason for its departure from this life.

Yet, it is still alive. It is still a living soul until the point of its death. And there will be living souls, there will be souls in eternity, who are amongst the elect that the Lord has chosen, who are there with them in glory, who never saw the light of day here.

But they were immortal souls. They are immortal souls. They lived in a womb for that time. They never saw the light of day. And we think, we think in terms of, oh, they were never born. Oh, they never really lived.

[21 : 07] Because they didn't see the light of the day of this, sin, sick, fallen world. They are, they never really lived. But they did live. They lived for a short time. They lived within the constriction, and confinement, but protection up to a point of their mother's womb.

An immortal soul. They are conceived and brought into being by the agency of the Lord. Using the parents, yes, as the instruments which brought it into being, but it is the Lord which brings an immortal soul into being.

It is the Lord who appoints the hour of its departure likewise. But we say, oh, they never really lived. But they did. But by the same token, we are as though in the womb of this earth, according to this godly bishop.

And it's a good example, as we say, here we live, and we think this is life in all its fullness. And we have a certain degree of consciousness. We don't know how much consciousness a baby in the womb has, but that is its world.

Its mother's womb is its world. It is nourished there. It grows there. It develops there. All the life that it knows is within those confinants. And that is all that it knows.

[22 : 15] And it doesn't have any interaction with other babies or other children or whatever the case may be. You could say, oh yes, but what about twins? Okay, leave that aside for now. But the fact is, it is very much alone there in the womb.

But that is life. As it knows it. Life as far as it knows in all its fullness. But the fact is, that if it comes to be born into the world, then as it grows, there will be so much more life that it never knew in the womb.

As it grows, as it gets bigger, as it begins to learn and be guided and taught and instructed and learn the ways of grown-ups and children and adults and so on. And all the things it's able to interact with, life on the outside compared to life in the womb, there's just no comparison at all. It's like life in all its fullness on the outside and life very constricted on the inside. And by the same token, life in this world will be so constricted and so confined and so alone in many ways compared to life in all its fullness once we are birthed, as it were, into eternity.

The resurrection of our bodies is a kind of coming out of the womb of the earth and entering upon immortality and nativity into another life.

[23 : 38] Now this is what Peter is talking about here. The glory that is laid up for those who love Christ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away reserved in heaven for you.

If you are in Christ, yes, you haven't yet entered upon that glory, but it is there and it is certain and the time will come just as sure as for a child in the womb. There is a time when it will reach the fullness and the fruition of its time within and it's ready to be born, ready to be birthed into the outside world.

We who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. So kept by the power of God, that's something to bear in mind first, that if we are enabled by grace to continue with the Lord and not to fall away, that is not because we are virtuous. It is not because we are good or because somehow we are worthy of God's blessing or anointing or forgiving. It is because we are kept by the power of God. It's because he has had mercy upon us. The other 11 disciples were not better men than Judas, but they were kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Judas was not worse than all the others, but he turned his back on the only way of being saved through Christ.

[25 : 05] He turned away from the Lord and in the end was lost because he did that. Now, if we turn away from the only source of life, then the only direction in which we can be turning is toward death.

We may not be there right away, but as we turn towards it, so there is no other way to go. It's like, as was used in this illustration in the past, if you're actually at the North Pole, whichever direction you walk off in into the icy wastes, away from the central point of the North Pole, you are always going south.

It doesn't matter where you go, you're always going to go south. So likewise, if you are in Christ and have Christ and know Christ and you begin to move away from him, the only direction which you can possibly go if you're going away from the Lord of life is towards death.

And that is what happens if we turn away from Christ. So if we are kept in him, it's not because you're virtuous, not because we're good or worthy, we're kept by the power of God through faith and to salvation.

Of course, faith is the part which we ourselves must play. We are called upon to have faith. It is the alone condition of salvation. And of course, we have none of ourselves, as Ephesians tells us.

[26 : 27] We are kept through faith and to salvation which faith we have none of ourselves. It is the gift of God. So likewise, when we think in terms of how Christ has done it all, even faith itself is a gift.

But of course, a gift must be accepted. It is as though somebody were to say, you know, right, I've got a journey lined up for you, I want you to go to Edinburgh or Glasgow, whatever it is, I have made the reservation, your ticket's waiting to be collected, in fact, I'm going to give you the ticket. Here's the ticket, it's already paid for, everything's already done, and what do you have to do? He's like, well, it's already done, everything's already done, I don't have to worry. What about the engines in the plane?

Are we going to have all the right amount of oil, and have to be checked over, and is all the different munitions all working, will the safety conditions all be right? And what about the pilots? Have they been trained enough?

Do they know exactly what they're doing with their charts and instruments and so on? You and I will not give that a second thought. We will not worry about the construction of the plane, we will not worry about the safety or the weight ratio of our passenger, we won't worry about whether or not the cabling crew or the pilots have been sufficiently trained.

[27 : 36] Our part is to turn up. Our part is to bring our ticket and to make sure that we follow through on that which has been done for us. We turn up, we go up the steps of the plane when we're told to, we sit there, we sit in the flight, we disembark at the other end.

The rest is somebody else's concern. And this faith which we are required to put into action, this is our part to do.

Christ has brought you the ticket. Christ has already given you the gift of faith but you have to exercise it. You have to do the equivalent of turning up at the airport or turning up at the ferry terminal.

You have to get on. You have to continue in the journey. You have to leave the rest with him. This inheritance, that's not your money in a sense. Whether it's incorruptible or whether there's likely some corruption in there, that's a bit of a problem.

It's not your worry. The pilot's training, it's not your worry. The instruments on the dashboard, not your worry. Whether or not the propeller's been properly oiled on the machine, the aircraft has been properly maintained, not your worry.

[28 : 42] Leave all that with other people whose job it is. Leave the preparation of heaven with the one whose job it is. Leave the purchase price of your salvation with the one whose job it is.

You can't add to it. You can't, if you decide, colouring the edge of your ticket make it more worthwhile. You can't, if you decide, oh well I'll just photocopy that and then colour it lots of different pretty colours and then it'll be a nicer ticket, it'll be a better ticket.

It won't enhance it any. The ticket has been paid and bought and it has been secured for you. Just use it. Just turn up and make sure that you take that journey and stay with it all the way through because all the other details, the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, doesn't fade away, reserved in heaven for you, kept by the power of God.

These are all things that are being done by somebody else. The bit that you and I must do, the bit that we must hold fast to is that which requires our faith.

Our faith is the substance of things hoped for. The evidence of things not seen. There is this apostle of hope again. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

[29 : 54] Without faith it is impossible to please him for he that cometh to God must believe that he is and he is an award of them that diligently seek him. Now if the Lord has given you the gift of faith, you are required to act upon it.

You are required to put it into practice and make it not a dead faith. The incorruptible bit, the undefiled, the fading not away, the reserved in heaven to you, that is all somebody else's problem. God has done all that. Your part is to put your faith into practice. We are kept by the power of God through faith and to salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

And if we are enabled by grace to do that, then corruption will not affect us. It will affect the body, but don't worry about that because the body is going to be raised at the last day.

The body is going to be transformed. It will be the same body, but it will have different characteristics. Just as Jesus' resurrection body was the same body in which he suffered.

[30 : 58] He showed them the print of the nails. He showed them the wounds in his hands, in his feet, in his side. It's the same body, but it has different characteristics. It is now a resurrection body.

So likewise, we who are raised at the last day, if we are passed from this life into the next, through the gate of death, if our bodies are laid in the ground, they will be raised.

They've been buried at sea. The sea shall give up the dead. If they have, as for the martyrs, been burned to ashes and dust, and the dust scattered to the four winds by their enemies, have no fear about scattered dust.

dust. What did the Lord make the first man from, if not from dust? He is able to make again. He is able to restore. He is able to give a resurrection body in all its fullness, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Now that time, whatsoever it should be, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, known unto God, are all his works from the beginning of the world. Acts 15 verse 18, whenever God should decide to do that, whenever he should decide to bring everything to its fullest, he knows when it is going to be.

[32 : 16] He knows how soon or how late it is going to be. If it is going to be soon, well, the urgency is for us to make good the opportunity. If it's going to be long, well, you don't know how long it's going to be, as we're talking about this morning, and that's a good thing.

It's as well that we don't know what it's going to be, because even with the, well, we know that the Lord's not actually going to come back for 257 years, so that's fine, but you and I are not going to be here for 257 years.

We only may be here for another seven days, so it is still the same urgency upon us to make good our relationship with the Lord. If we are kept by his grace, it is because we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

That which is divine has preserved us. Remember what John wrote in chapter 1, Jesus, he was in the world and the world was made by him, the world and even not.

He came to his own, his own received him not, but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them which believe on his name, kept through faith unto salvation, which were born not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man, but of God.

[33 : 29] It is his word which brings them into being, his holy and inspired word. In the beginning was the word, the word was with God, the word was God, that which brings you into being, that which causes you to be brought forth to the state of grace, the state of faith, and to be kept in it, and it is ready to be revealed in the last time.

Now, whensoever that should be, the Lord knows when it will be, the Lord knows who will be gathered unto us. This inheritance, you know, the prophet Isaiah says in chapter 33, verse 79, eyes shall see the king in his beauty, they shall behold the land that is very far off.

It's very far off just now, or it seems very far off just now, but it will not be far off forever, it is ever coming closer. The same chapter in verse 22 says, for the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king, he will save us.

That salvation which is promised, that inheritance that is laid out for us, it is because of what the Lord has already done, and in the meantime, just as he is our judge at the last, but we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, the Lord is our lawgiver and our king, and that I would suggest to you refers to our requirement to walk and to live according to his teaching here upon us. He gives us his word, his commands, his laws, for now, for this world. And it's not that in heaven, oh, well, it's just a riot of anarchy because God's law and commands don't apply anymore, but rather it's the case that they are now in our hearts so much we don't need the written commands anymore because we know it already.

[35 : 18] if you've been driving for say 30 years, then you don't necessarily have to consult the highway code and look at the manual every time you're about to turn on the ignition and say in a mirror signal maneuver, what is that sign there and he must read up the highway code because you know it.

It's in your head, it's in your heart, you've been doing it every day for 30 years, it just comes naturally to you and in glory. Although we will have the commands and teachings and laws of God to be written in our hearts.

It will be so natural, it will be so much a part of life there, it will be not even like second nature, it will be first nature to us. The Lord is our long giver, the Lord is our king, he will save us.

Going back to the beginning of that chapter 33 in Isaiah, there's that lovely verse that says, O Lord be gracious unto us, we have waited for thee, be thou our arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble.

There is trouble in this world, but the Lord has laid up an inheritance for those who love him. It is to an inheritance incorruptible, an undefiled that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith of the salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

[36 : 39] Yes, the likelihood is that unless the Lord comes back, we shall physically die. But that is not the end of it. It is, as the good bishop said there, it is a birthing into a new life.

For as the psalmist put it, because my soul engraved to dwell, shall not be left by thee, nor wilt thou give thy holy one corruption to see, it is incorruptible and defiled.

Thou wilt me show the path of life, of joys that is full store before thy face, at thy right hand are pleasures evermore.

This is what the Lord has laid up for those who love him. Pleasures evermore, because that pleasure, that life is with him, in his presence, seeing his face, being with him, which is life in all its forms, of which we have, yes, a little taste here, we have a little experience, a little knowledge, we love one whom, as Peter says, whom having not seen ye love, in whom though now ye see him not yet believe in you, rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

We are born again to have none of corruptible seed, but of his holy word, just as we were reading here in John 1 before. This faith which we have in him, in one whom we have not seen, will be fulfilled with a glory when we shall see, and we shall see him as he is, and we shall be like him.

[38 : 17] 1 John tells us, chapter 3, this is what is laid up in heaven, this inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, fades not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, ready to be revealed even now, if we will have it.

You see, the Lord has done it all. He has made all the arrangements, he has purchased the ticket, he has placed the ticket in your hand and said, turn up, make the journey, travel with me, walk with me along the way, take this flight, take this voyage, take this journey and I will go with you every step of the way.

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, they won't overflow you, when you pass through the fire, you won't be burned, you will still have to pass through it, but you won't be burned because I will be with you, the Holy One of history, I'll never leave you, nor forsake it, here's your ticket, it's already paid for, it's already bought, act with it, put that faith, which is the gift of God, into practice and make this journey with the Lord and you may have already started the journey and

have sat down at the side of the road, tired and weedy and thinking I can't possibly go on, well maybe you need a little rest and that's okay, because the Lord gives his beloved sleep and then he awakens them and then he picks them up and then he walks on with them, like the disciples on the road to Emmaus who were sad and were downcast, till Jesus walked with them and opened to them the scriptures and they said didn't our heart burn within us when he opened to us the scriptures.

when Christ goes with you on the journey, the journey itself is transformed and the destination becomes more glorious because it is to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled that fadeth not away, which is reserved in heaven for you who are kept, kept by the power of God through faith of the salvation, ready to be revealed, ready to be revealed in the last time, ready to be prepared, revealed and given, even now, if we will have it, if we will act on that which the Lord has done for sinners like us.

Let us pray.